THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE.

ONE by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall;
Some are coming, some are going;
Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
Let thy whole strength go to each;
Let no future dreams elate thee,
Learn thou first what these can teach.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown and holy,
When each gem is set with care.

Do not linger with regretting,
Or for passing hours despond:
Nor, the daily toil forgetting,
Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token,
Reaching heaven: but one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken
Ere thy pilgrimage be done.

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AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

TO OUR READERS.

THROUGH the grace of our Heavenly Father a quarter of a century—with its joys and its sorrows, its failures and its successes—has passed away since the first number of this serial was issued. From the outset it has contained such a record of the Ragged School movement that a perusal of its pages served to keep our readers abreast with every successive development of this great home mission, whether at home or abroad. It has also supplied such suggestions of an aggressive character, as well as such hints on general management, as the experience of workers rendered desirable.

On taking a broad survey of the present state of Ragged Schools, we are thankful to indicate that they do not show any signs of decay, or of that red-tapeism which has strangled so many plans for the social weal. The fact that last year no less than seventy operations were added to existing machinery, proves that the managers and teachers of Ragged Schools are as keenly alive as ever to the social and spiritual claims of the destitute or outcast classes. As was anticipated, the action of the London School Board has decreased the number and attendance at our Day Schools, many of which have been transferred to the School Board. Yet notwithstanding such transfer above 70 institutions conduct Day Schools, with an average attendance of 12,000. The Night Schools, too, attract nearly 6,000 boys and girls every evening. Hence, the Committee of the Ragged School Union felt, so long as the local committees saw the need of their secular work, that they could not better expend the funds entrusted to their stewardship by the public, than by increasing their annual grants, and by helping the affiliated institutions out of pecuniary difficulty. Thereby they hope to invigorate, if not to extend, the work at large.

It is scarcely needful to intimate that our Sunday Schools show no signs of decay, but rather of that growth which health always indicates. Thus, nearly 30,000 children listen to the Gospel every Lord's day, from the lips of 2,882 earnest teachers. In every case the Bible is the text-book, and the one object is to gather the lambs of Jesus into the fold of the Good Shepherd.

The experience of twenty-five years necessarily suggests some alterations in this Magazine; more especially now that the Ragged School of the future will probably become less and less secular, and more and more restricted to its original social and missionary work. The mere action, indeed, of School Boards suggests many modifications in our plans, so that, ceasing to keep in old ruts, we may occupy fresher ground.

Hence it is proposed to make such improvements in the January number of this Magazine—which will be issued as the first of a new series—as will serve to meet the *present* exigencies of Ragged Schools. In this way we hope not only to promote the healthy growth of Ragged Schools, but to disseminate a knowledge of that glorious Gospel which has not yet lost its ancient power of bringing the wildest under subjection to the sole law-giver of the Church—Jesus Christ!

1, *Exeter Hall, December*, 1873. THE EDITOR.

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